

The
Botanical Gazette.

EDITORS:

JOHN M. COULTER,

WABASH COLLEGE, CRAWFORDSVILLE, IND.

CHARLES R. BARNES,

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, MADISON, WIS.

J. C. ARTHUR,

PURDUE UNIVERSITY, LAFAYETTE, IND.

October 13.1890.

My dear Dr.Watson:--

Your first letter reached me a day after I had mailed my letter of inquiry to you, and in the same mail with it came the official notice of my appointment. A day or two ago I received your last letter and also one from President Eliot, stating the terms of my appointment and asking if they were acceptable, to which I replied in the affirmative.

I am ready now to begin the work on the Field & Garden Botany. I have written to Ivison asking for three copies of the book, two of which I shall want to cut up probably. I am trying now to solve the problem as to how to make the most judicious selection of cultivated plants to be included, and on this point at present I would like your advice. I suppose that the most helpful work will be the revised edition of Henderson's Handbook of Plants (1890). If you have a copy of this I would be glad if you would send it to me. If there is no copy at the Herbarium I suppose it will have to be purchased. In addition I have thought of sending a letter to all of the florists and gardeners who make a business of selling seeds, bulbs and plants (such as Henderson, Vick, Ferry et al.) asking them to indicate on a copy of their catalogues what plants are in most general cultivation as shown by their sales. I do not know how much of a response I should get, but

however meager the information would be useful. Let me know whether you think this worth while. In case such a circular as this is sent out, how is the expense for printing and postage (say 2 or 3 dollars) to be met? Shall I pay the bills and send a bill with vouchers to the Herbarium?

The only other plan that occurs to me is to make up first a list of cultivated plants to be included and then send this list to growers, seedsmen, florists and others, asking for criticisms, and the indication of omissions. Which plan would you think preferable?

I send you by this mail a circular of the *Hepaticae Britannicae*, which you have probably already received. Is the Herbarium getting this set? If not I think that it ought to begin, if there are any funds available for the purpose. An effort should also be made to obtain, if possible, the first centuries.

I enclose a letter received some time ago, as you will see from the date, from Mrs Britton. I have made no reply to it, and shall make none. While I am glad to be well out of the scrape, into which I got myself in a moment of impulse, I cannot but feel that the Brittons have in this matter treated me with a very great lack of frankness---which seems to be somewhat characteristic. At the meeting of the AAAS they were desirous apparently of entering into the discussion of all the minutiae of my plans as to the proposed Manual, with never a word that they had been planning a book for five years which would come into competition with the one I proposed. While they have been exceedingly kind to me in sending books and specimens, I must say that any such disingenuousness (to draw it mild) is very repellant.

Please return Mrs. B's letter.

Sincerely yours,

W. D. Barnes

90.
Oct 16,

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